Center for Immigration Studies

Backgrounder

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High Noon to Midnight

Why Current Immigration Policy Dooms American Jewry

By Dr. Stephen M. Steinlight

Among the articles of faith in the waning culture of secular liberalism that has served as an ersatz religion for many mainstream American Jews, the most vulnerable tenet is belief in "generous legal immigration," the euphemism for open-borders immigration in the lexicon of American-Jewish public affairs agencies. This is not to accuse them of crude hypocrisy and double-talk so much as engaging in intellectual and moral trimming, self-deception, and denial. Having failed to persuade the National Immigration Forum, to which virtually all belong, to distinguish between legal and illegal immigration, they chose the path of least resistance: they remained and went along with the charade, convincing themselves they could finesse this blurring of illusion and reality.

Promulgating self-deception isn't merely bad ethics; it's untenable as a matter of policy: it conflicts with the interests, security and values of American Jewry. Increasing numbers of American Jews from the leadership on down are embarrassed by this transparent sophistry. Survey research, plus mountains of anecdotal evidence, reveals a profound change in attitude among American Jews. Opinion polls in the three years following the attacks of September 11, 2001 show a plurality favoring lowered immigration, 70 percent the introduction of a secure national identity card, and 55 percent believing Muslims are the most anti-Semitic group in the United States. It *may* not require another domestic terrorist enormity for respondents to discern simple cause-and-effect relationships; more ambitious efforts to persuade might suffice.

My experience at the grassroots suggests Jews know little about the history of their own immigration, immigration policy, the scale of immigration, or the engines that drive it. Frequently, all that's required to effect attitudinal change is apprising them. When I began my efforts, the Jewish media spoke of Jewish attitudes in favor of open-borders immigration as "monolithic;" now it's commonplace to speak of "a raging debate." If this could be accomplished essentially by one person, what might a concerted, well-funded effort achieve? Opinion is volatile and up for grabs. Among the community's organizational leadership, enthusiasm for this dangerous anachronism is a mile wide and an inch deep.

The collision between old allegiances and urgent new realities had begun among Jewish leadership, if *sotto voce*, before 9/11. That *tremendum* accelerated the process by revealing the connection between our anarchic immigration policy and the savage assault on the innocent lives and national security of the American people. In its wake, with the war against Islamic terror that began in earnest in Afghanistan broadening into one against genocidal expansionist Arab rogue-regimes with the toppling of Saddam Hussein, with major news stories concerning the prevalence of virulent anti-Semitism throughout the Muslim world (Mahathir Muhammad's speech at the Islamic summit, which might have been ghost-written by Joseph Goebbels, left a searing impression, as have the crazed maunderings of Osama bin Laden about Jews and Crusaders) or its upsurge within the European

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Union, as well as media coverage of the "New Anti-Semitism," it has become difficult to remain simultaneously credible and in a state of denial. In choosing between a sentimental archaism and confronting existential horror, only those willing to be perceived as purblind or suicidal don't eventually adjust to facts.

Thus, behind closed doors, Jewish leaders speak a different language. This is not entirely new with immigration, but the gulf is now a chasm. Privately they express grave concern that unregulated immigration will prove ruinous to American Jewry, as it has for French Jewry, and will for Jews throughout Western Europe. There's particular fear about the impact on Jewish security, as well as American support for Israel, of the rapid growth of the Muslim population. At the conclusion of meetings with national leaders, several told me, "You're 1000 percent right, but I can't go out and say it yet." While they have yet to find the civic courage to break with the traditional consensus they can see the Rubicon glinting in the distance, and many recognize that eventually they will have to cross it.

Painful Changes. I've spoken about immigration with more grassroots Jews than any other person in America, and I know that change won't come painlessly. At a meeting at one of New York City's most prominent synagogues, board members clashed savagely over my remarks, with the president of the congregation, who called me a racist, being attacked by a senior board member as "the kind of Jew that sold out others to the Nazis." Segments of the leadership remain true believers in the dying faith of open immigration, and will not give up without a fight. But that change is inevitable is clear enough. The question, ultimately, is whether it will come too late to make a difference to the future of America and its Jewish community.

The prospect of breaking with the old consensus is so wrenching many are effectively paralyzed by it, but it must concentrate their minds wonderfully to know that upholding it endangers the viability of the community whose protection is their *raison d'être*. They recognize they risk a harsh rebuke by history as those responsible for "losing America" — just as their predecessors have been pilloried for their failure to do more to save European Jewry in the years leading up to and during the Holocaust. American-Jewish leadership is experiencing profound vertigo as it seeks to chart a course through circumstances that appear logical only to a schizophrenic.

On one hand, they're leaders of a community that feels a sense of belonging unknown in the history of Diaspora Jewry. America's Jews have attained success and acceptance beyond their forebear's fondest dreams. They're influential far beyond their miniscule percentage of the population. They wield significant political power and cultural influence. Nearly half the money spent in Democratic Party presidential primaries comes from Jewish contributors. In recent years, Jewish presence at the highest levels of government has become routine. A majority of Clinton's cabinet members were Jews. Jewish advisors play key roles in the Bush administration's national security, foreign and military affairs. Had Gore become President, an Orthodox Jew would have been a heartbeat away from the nation's highest office. If John Kerry is elected the next President, he will be the country's first chief executive with Jewish roots.

Among the best-known indices of its success, 10 percent of the U.S. Senate is Jewish, as is a majority of the presidents at Ivy League universities, and faculties and student bodies at elite colleges and universities are typically 30 to 40 percent Jewish. Jews form a high percentage within the learned professions and among writers, nationally syndicated journalists, and publishers of some of the nation's leading newspapers and periodicals, and as creators and disseminators of high and popular culture. They play the predominant role in Hollywood, and thus shape much of our self-definition as Americans. Jews also hold key positions within many leading financial institutions, especially within investment banking and the brokerage industry.

Fading Anti-Semitism. The principal cause, as well as symptom of these successes, anti-Semitism has fallen to historic lows among white Christians, which still form America's dominant cultural group. Once a significant factor in American life, anti-Semitism has become a peripheral phenomenon. A recent ADL study found only some 12 percent of white Christian Americans hold anti-Semitic attitudes. Indeed, a key factor contributing to the crisis in Jewish Continuity is that our neighbors like us and often wish to marry us and have children with us.

A risible indicator of how marginal anti-Semitism has become is how many candidates for the Democratic Party's presidential nomination "discovered" their Jewish roots, or, if they weren't lucky to have any, emphasized the fact that their wife and/or children are Jewish. In an earlier America, their forebears concealed their Judaism by changing their names or converting to Christianity; their descendants see an advantage in flaunting what their antecedents found prudent to hide.

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Romanticized Image of Immigration. Historical consciousness and political acuity notwithstanding, American Jews, like everyone, believe in myths, which die slowly because they represent values and ideals not realities, and the myth of Jewish immigrant experience will atrophy only gradually. Of all the pieces of Americana that American Jews know by heart, among the most-cherished is that verse inscribed on the base of the Statue of Liberty: "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free…"

Written by a Jewish schoolgirl poet inspired by the persecution of Jews in Czarist Russia, for more than a century it's expressed a highly romanticized image of immigration, one that became iconic and all-encompassing despite its irrelevance to much it purports to represent. This quote concerns refugees and asylum seekers and has scant application to immigrants per se. If American Jews are to get this issue right, they must disaggregate the two. Jewish immigrant experience more closely parallels that of refugees and asylum seekers than typical immigrants — then or now.

No group has exemplified, revered and clung to this idealized conception as much as the Jews who arrived in the Great Waves and their descendants. Given the horror that engulfed those that remained behind, including tens of thousands that might have been saved had the United States not closed its doors in 1924 and slammed them shut on Jews fleeing Nazism and the Holocaust in the 1930s and 1940s, no group has appreciated the blessings of immigrating to America more than Jews. Against this backdrop they must confront one of the most anguishing questions they've had to face in the entirety of their history in the United States: whether to support a continuation of mass immigration that's reached a historically unprecedented level or exercise their still-considerable political and economic clout to try to curtail it.

With approximately 1.5 million legal and illegal immigrants entering annually — equivalent to the population of Philadelphia — the United States has the highest number of foreign-born residents ever. As a percentage of the population, these 33 million, strengthened continuously, will soon surpass a level not seen since the first decade of the 20th century. Within a few years they will constitute the largest percentage of foreign-born in U.S. history.

For Jews, the immigration debate pits the heart against the head. In their gut, many feel that substantially reducing immigration betrays the legacy of their parents and grandparents. But a growing number believes that maintaining this policy betrays their children and grandchildren. The danger arises because mass immigration means importing mass anti-Semitism. The upsurge of violent anti-Semitism in Western Europe tracks perfectly with mass immigration, especially of Muslims. Mass immigration is also the generator of Balkanizing notions of extreme multiculturalism. Having worked for nearly a century through communal organizations, the courts, and interfaith dialogue to achieve a tolerant and *cohesive* society largely free of anti-Semitism, it's anguishing for American Jews to watch current immigration erase this outcome. However uncomfortable, American Jews must grapple with the issue: they have a greater stake than other Americans in how this policy plays out.

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Not a Right/Left Contest. There's a silk purse in this sow's ear in terms of converting progressive American Jews to the cause of immigration reform. Recognizing that the battle is *not* a right/left contest salves their consciences as they pursue rational self-interest. Reminding audiences the strongest proponents of open-borders immigration are *The Wall Street Journal* and the Chamber of Commerce never hurts, nor does it require much to convince liberals the explanation is greed, the goal an unending supply of cheap labor, and that corporations are unconcerned about collateral political, cultural, or environmental downsides.

President Bush's recent proposal for "immigration reform," a sham to amnesty between 10 to 14 million illegal aliens by turning them into members of a permanent legal underclass, a conception that is an affront to the deepest ideals of American political and social culture from the Founders on, will make it easier to persuade Jewish progressives to re-think this issue. Bush's amnesty will also legalize the status of what is estimated to be some 300,000 individuals from countries on the terrorist watch list.

A recent ABC News poll reports that Americans aren't buying the President's scheme; 2-1, they see it, simply, as an attempt to drive down wages. It's also being denounced by Americans of *all* political stripes for its violation of long-cherished American principles. If enacted, Bush's scheme would transform the

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United States from what it is today — the best approximation the modern world has known of the democratic ideal represented by the Athens of Pericles — into Sparta, a hierarchical state with rigid social distinctions carried on the backs of a class of helots.

Demographic Handwriting on the Wall

Of the manifold concerns about immigration felt by all Americans and American Jews in particular, the way it fuels Muslim immigration is most worrying. The May 14, 2003, *Globe & Mail* announced that Muslims outnumber Jews in Canada, noting this demographic shift "could ultimately affect [Canada's] position toward the protracted Middle East conflict."

Muslim ascendancy in Canada is a harbinger of things to come in America, with potentially enormous impact for both American Jewry and American foreign policy. According to the 1991 Canadian Census, there were 25 percent more Jews in Canada than Muslims. Within a single decade that demographic advantage was erased. According to the 2001 census, the Muslim population of Canada exceeded the Jewish population by 75 percent.

CNN and ABC News recently reported a *doubling* of the Arab population in the United States in just two decades. The number of Arabs alone (not Muslims in general) is already nearly 1.3 million. For virtually its entire history, Arab immigration was primarily Christian and lopsidedly Lebanese; now it's virtually all Muslim, with the immigrants' lands of origin mainly Egypt, the West Bank, and Yemen.

Muslim immigration has fundamentally altered demography, culture, and the political landscape of Western Europe. Its impact on Jewish life is disastrous, and it has turned European foreign policy on the Middle East from even-handedness to one that is overtly anti-Israel, if not outright anti-Semitic. Symbolizing the transition was the EU's failure to condemn the Nazi oration by the former Malaysian Prime Minister. Also shocking was the EU's rejection of the report it commissioned from the German Technical University on the upsurge of anti-Semitism in Europe. It was labeled as "racist" because it identified by far the greatest numbers of perpetrators of anti-Semitic outrages as Muslim. In today's Islamized Europe, Jews live under physical threat, something unknown since the rise of fascism. Nor is hostility to Israel confined to political leadership, media elites, or Muslims: a survey conducted by the European Commission, "Iraq and Peace in the World," revealed that more ordinary Europeans consider Israel a threat to world peace *than any other country*. Asked which countries posed a risk to world peace, Israel topped all others with 59 percent, ahead of Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Iran, Pakistan, and even North Korea. (The United States was tied with North Korea at 53 percent.)

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Following in Europe's Footsteps. Large-scale immigration places the United States on the threshold of a similar shift. Some 5.3 million Jews live in the United States compared to approximately 4 million Muslims. The shift's a certainty because the exponential growth of the Muslim population is paralleled by a sharp decline in the number of American Jews, in absolute terms and as a percentage of the population; further, there's no reason to believe this will be reversed. Jewish fertility is flat; Jews are an aging population; nearly half intermarry, and efforts to promote "Jewish Continuity" have yielded zero results. The findings of the United Jewish Communities Population Study confirm these pessimistic assessments. Projecting 25 years ahead, Muslims won't need to exaggerate their numbers (they frequently cite the spurious figure of seven million) to have major influence on American politics, and what America does matters enormously. The United States is not only the world's sole superpower; it's also Israel's only ally. Without discounting the sincerity of many American Christians in their support for Israel, it would be naïve to believe politicians wouldn't respond to an ever-growing Islamic voting bloc, one that will eventually far outnumber Jewish voters.

Whatever their shortcomings, American politicians can count votes and campaign contributions. As Muslim Americans become politically organized — they're well on their way — politicians won't ignore this growing segment of the electorate. Muslims naturalize and vote at higher than average percentages — 65 percent in the last Presidential race. Like Jews, they're concentrated in states with high Electoral College votes.

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Importing Anti-Semitism

As demography shifts, America's Jews will experience a rising threat to their physical security. The violent anti-Semitism sweeping Europe is the work of young, poor, alienated Muslims. The great majority of synagogue burnings, desecrations of cemeteries, and assaults on Jews in religious attire are perpetrated by young Muslims indoctrinated to hate Jews by Islamist imams in the radical mosques that dominate European Islamic life. Virtually every major city in Western Europe has a central mosque, funded by the Saudis, that preaches extremist Wahabbi doctrine. These mosques, that have spawned the likes of Zacharias Moussaoui and Richard Reid, are recruiting centers and financial support networks for Muslim terrorist cells.

In the *banlieues* — the lawless slums that ring Paris and other French cities — Jews and Jewish institutions are repeatedly attacked by marauding gangs of Muslim hoodlums. CNN recently reported that *violent attacks on Jews in Paris average 12 a day*. Reminiscent of Germany, circa 1930, when Hitler's Brown Shirts ruled the streets while a timid government and press kept silent, government and media in Western Europe turn a blind eye to Islamic anti-Semitic violence out of fear of their growing political power and reflexive political-correctness. Living amidst a Muslim population that outnumbers it 10 to one and a political establishment indifferent to anti-Semitism, beleaguered French Jews endure conditions not seen for more than half a century. Overt violence is rarer in Great Britain, but rioting *second-generation* South Asian youth shouting "death to the Jews" in the Midlands some 18 months ago may be a harbinger, and Britain hosts the most radical mosques in Europe; those tracking worldwide Islamism refer to the British capital as "Londonistan."

Rapid Transformation Likely. Drawing comparisons between countries is admittedly risky — the United States is not France, or Germany, or even Canada — but it would be foolhardy to ignore what's happening abroad. Unless changes are made in U.S. immigration policy, a similar transformation will likely occur here. It will also happen much more quickly than most might imagine. Current U.S. immigration law ensures an exponential growth in the Islamic population. Having established a foothold over the past 30 years and attained citizenship, these new Americans may petition to bring in large numbers of extended family members. Current policy entitles U.S. citizens to bring not only their nuclear families but parents, adult children and *their* spouses and children, and adult siblings and *their* spouses and children. Over time, *these* extended family members can bring a similar range of relatives in an unbreakable chain. What begins with a single immigrant can result in the immigration of an entire village, and in some West Bank towns as much as half the population now lives in the United States or has American citizenship.

Political and economic realities within the Islamic world guarantee a tidal wave of immigration — unless a cut-off mechanism is enacted. Most of the world's 1.3 billion Muslims live in poverty-stricken, politically oppressive countries; two-thirds of the poorest people on Earth live in socially, politically, and economically fossilized Muslim societies. Given the chance to immigrate to the United States, countless millions would — at the same time harboring hatred and contempt for American culture and political institutions.

Little to Gain From Immigration. By contrast, the global Jewish population is roughly 13 to 15 million — one one-hundredth that of Islam. One-third live in the United States, a third more in Israel, and the remainder spread mainly among First World nations where the political and economic incentives for immigration don't exist. Thus, Jews have little to gain directly from open door U.S. immigration. Even in a worst-case scenario for the remnant of Jews in the Former Soviet Union, Latin America, and perhaps even parts of Western Europe, Israel guarantees a safe haven. Further, a byproduct of American-Jewish political influence has been that persecuted Jews have gone to the head of the refugee line for resettlement here. Under the Lautenberg Amendment, hundreds of thousands of Jews from the Former Soviet Union entered the United States, ahead of thousands of other refugees who, arguably, faced greater danger in places like Central America and Africa. A first casualty of the loss of political power could be the special consideration now accorded Jewish refugees.

Jews stand to lose far more than any other group of Americans from a policy that brings in millions of immigrants from cultures that range from antipathetic to antithetic to Jews and Israel. Muslim immigrants feel enormous hostility toward Jews and are intent on nullifying Jewish political power in the United States as a step towards destroying Israel.

A Totalitarian Ideology

Within the Islamic universe is a fast-spreading totalitarian ideology whose name is Islamism, though it's called many things — Jihadism, Salafism, Wahhabism, or simply Fundamentalism. Its goal is world

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domination and the imposition of literalist, inhumane, unchangeable Islamic law on all nations and peoples. It pursues its agenda through brainwashing, mass hysteria, intimidation, assassination, terrorism, political repression, and, on occasion — such as in Bangladesh when it declared independence from Pakistan in 1971 — genocide. Like fascism, the movement it most resembles, Islamism embodies the politics of the culture of despair, reflecting the failure of every other movement in the Muslim world to bring power, prestige, and decent living standards, including secular nationalism and Pan-Arabism in the 1950s and 1960s.

It's ascendant everywhere. The resurgence of Shiite activism in Iraq may reignite its waning virulence in Iran. *The New York Times* recently reported *the most secular* Arab nation, Syria, now has a vibrant Islamist movement. It's thriving in Afghanistan, and is an assassination away from re-taking control of Pakistan. It dominates the richest of all Arab states, Saudi Arabia, the paymaster for Islamism; it rules in Sudan, Yemen, Somalia, and controls the street in East Africa. It threatens to turn the largely moderate Islam of India increasingly militant; it may well overthrow the comparatively moderate Muslim society and regime in Bangladesh. It's produced a body count of slaughtered innocents that runs into the tens of thousands in Algeria, and is a constant threat to stability in Egypt. It's gaining ground in the Caucasus; and there are Islamist insurgencies from Southern Thailand to the Philippines. A militant Albania and break-away Kosovo endanger not just little Macedonia, but pose an Islamist threat across the Balkans. And its adherents number in the millions in the heart of Europe.

If "free" elections were held across the Muslim world, the pan-Islamists would take power in most places; then elections would cease. Islamism hates pluralism, individual rights, freedom of conscience, freedom of expression, secular civil society, separation of religion and government, constitutional law, human rights, women's rights, the rights of religious minorities, Christianity, the West in general, the United States in particular, and most of all it has identified Jews and Israel as its foremost enemies — enemies to be exterminated. The movement may have as many as 300 to 400 million enthusiasts, with a majority of non-activist Muslims cheering from the sidelines.

It will not conquer the world militarily, though a stealth strategy of demographic transformation through immigration *is* working in Western Europe. The absurd unreality of the goal doesn't lessen its danger. Nazism and Communism harbored similar delusions. Their defeat could not resurrect the millions annihilated in their names, including one-third of all the Jews in the world. How many really believe that 9/11 will be the last enormity committed on American soil? Our leaders warn us repeatedly there is something like a 100 percent certainty they will strike again.

Latino Anti-Semitism. Muslims are not alone in entering America en mass with anti-Semitic prejudices. The Latin American societies that are the largest source of contemporary immigration — 60 percent from Mexico and Central America — are steeped in a culture of theological anti-Semitism that's defied the post-Vatican II enlightenment of European and North American Catholicism. Nor have they a mitigating history of familiarity with Jews, little knowledge and no direct or familial experience of the Holocaust, and regard Jews simply as among the most privileged of white Americans. An ADL study found 47 percent of Latinos hold strongly anti-Semitic attitudes.

Mexican disinterest in naturalization will protect American-Jewish political influence for perhaps another decade or two. Of the massive demographic bulge that entered the United States in the early 1980s, less than 20 percent has naturalized. In the last presidential election, Jews outpolled Latinos in L.A. County! Whether this sleeping giant will awaken is among the great political conundrums of our time. The Democrats are silent on immigration because they assume Latinos will join them; the Republicans harbor similar hopes and also say nothing because cheap Latino labor is red meat to their big corporate contributors. Even Jewish organizations refuse to face the immediate threat of Islamic immigration for fear of offending Latinos, but this is one dog that may never bark.

Even if the powerful assimilative forces of American culture prevail, it will take several generations, and it is arguable that they will never fully succeed with Muslims unless an Islamic Reformation comes about — an unlikely scenario because its proponents will be branded as infidels by traditional religious authorities and targeted for murder.

Jewish Experience Was Atypical

Popular perceptions of American immigration are skewed because the story has been largely told by Jews about Jews. The Jewish narrative is seen as prototypical when it was *unique*. In each aspect of their immigration — why they emigrated, their history in their countries of origin, their acculturation into America — their experience was distinct from those of almost every other immigrant group.

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Jews who arrived in the Great Wave at the turn of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century resembled refugees and asylum seekers more than they did immigrants. The quest for economic opportunity motivated many to come, but they came chiefly to escape religious persecution and political oppression. Unlike the substantial percentage of Italians, Poles, and others who returned to Europe, they migrated one way. Given the societies they left, often fleeing for their lives, Jewish immigrants embraced the ideal of patriotic assimilation into American society. Within a few years of arrival, they mastered English. Within a generation, Yiddish was rarely spoken by their American-born children.

No Lingering Allegiances. Distinct from the majority culture wherever they lived, Jews did not bring lingering allegiance to their countries of origin or to the political ideology or religious culture that flourished there (with the exceptions of socialism and Marxism, sympathies that evaporated shortly after arrival), as did almost every other group of immigrants. Living for centuries as outsiders in hostile societies Jews developed survival mechanisms that made adjustment to America relatively easy and gave them advantages over millions experiencing minority status for the first time. In the Old Country, segments of the population, often with government connivance, sought to kill them; in America, the natives were satisfied with keeping them out of their neighborhoods, professional associations, country clubs, and elite universities.

Unlike Jewish immigrants, non-Jewish immigrants of a century ago maintained strong emotional ties to their countries of origin, but their societies and cultures were neither hostile to America nor obsessed with it; they certainly didn't blame America for their every problem. Much of the non-European world — virtually all the Islamic one — was part of the British, French, or Russian empires. Before WWI, America was not a global power. Circumstances and attitudes could not be more different now. Anti-American hostility dominates the cultures from which most immigrants hail.

Between the America's Western worldview and the Islamic one is a wider, perhaps unbridgeable divide that bears directly on Muslim acculturation. The concept of the nation state commanding the loyalty of its citizens is highly problematic throughout the Muslim world, with a handful of exceptions (Turkey foremost among them), and not only because many Islamic countries were drawn haphazardly on maps by European diplomats shockingly ignorant of the religion, culture, and histories of the peoples they ruled,

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and whose "nation-building" was secondary to their global rivalry. For most of the world's Muslims, social authority does not reside in the polity but in the *Umma*, the community of the faithful ruled by Koranic law, not in any head of state, constitutional principles, or territorially denominated countries flying different flags. When Osama bin Laden dreams of global order he recalls the Caliphates and the Ottoman Empire — pan-national Islamic domains in which the unifying idea was Islamic religion and law.

Anti-U.S. Resentment. Many Mexicans also embrace a strong tradition of anti-U.S. resentment and historical grievance. A common belief is that the *gringos* are responsible for their chronic economic woes. Nor have they forgotten that a sizable chunk of the American Southwest was conquered by the United States in the Mexican War of 1846-1848. For some, flooding America with their countrymen is a stratagem in an undeclared war of *Reconquista*. Because the two nations are joined by a long, porous border — the longest on earth between a First and a Third World country — continuous two-way migration inhibits strong identification with the United States.

Perhaps the chief distinction between today's immigration and that of yesteryear is the absence of the tacit and overt pressures that assimilated even the most recalcitrant. These forces have been weakened by multiculturalist ideology that legitimizes and reinforces identity politics; the demise of Americanization programs; the death of civic education; the rise of bilingualism; and the elimination of obligatory national service.

Technological differences also carry gigantic consequences: the revolution in modern transportation and communications allows immigrants to maintain continuous, ongoing ties with native lands, cultures and languages — something not possible a hundred years ago. Many "immigrants" are permanent resident aliens who live in two societies simultaneously but maintain primary loyalty to the cultural and political heritage of their countries of origin.

It is highly unlikely today's immigrants will be as rapidly or fully absorbed into the mainstream as were our parents and grandparents. The immigrants

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are different; the country and its social institutions are different; the economy is different; technology is different; what is deemed normative is different. To believe the outcome will be the same under a wholly distinct set of conditions and socio-political constructs is not merely willful thinking: it is absurd.

Trouble on the Home Front

Notwithstanding their emotional stake in Israel, America's Jews have a more immediate concern with anti-Semitism at home. Anti-Semitism is an immensely complex phenomenon, but some important distinctions are simple: there's a great difference between harboring the sentiment and feeling the license to act on it. In the Western democracies where most Jews outside Israel reside, public expression of anti-Semitism is directly linked to immigration. Western Europe now holds the dubious distinction of leading the world in anti-Semitic violence.

Anti-Semitic violence is much more rare in the United States but it's growing, and is increasingly perpetrated by Muslim youth. The resurgence of anti-Semitism manifests itself most strongly, sometimes thinly disguised as anti-Zionism, on college campuses. The campus is the most inhospitable place for Jews and supporters of Israel in the United States, something that Hillel, the traditional institutional Jewish presence on America's campuses, is now addressing by developing talking-points for Jewish students to defend themselves against assaults on Israel and Judaism by Arab and Islamist students, fellow-travelers among other "aggrieved" minorities, and the legion of politically-correct kids of all backgrounds.

Surrounded by Concrete Barriers. American Jews already live in a state of heightened threat. A visit to New York, home to America's largest Jewish population, provides striking evidence that Jews no longer live in safety. Virtually every high-profile Jewish institution in New York is surrounded by concrete barriers to prevent car bombs exploding too close to the building, while being checked by security guards and passing through metal detectors are now a routine a part of attending religious services. Such vigilance is not confined to New York. Throughout the country, in communities with a substantial Muslim presence, security is a critical part of planning any sort of Jewish political or communal event — especially those intended to demonstrate support for Israel. An address by a representative of Israel or a speaker known as a critic of Islamism ensures an armed police presence.

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Reality is dawning on many American Jews that something is amiss, although it seems lost on some of the country's most venerable Jewish organizations. There's a sad, if comic irony associated with the fact that employees at organizations like ADL, the American Jewish Committee, and the Presidents' Conference must pass through a gauntlet of concrete barriers, armed guards, metal detectors, and double bulletproof anterooms as they come to work each morning to protect them from radical Islamic terrorists, in order to spend their days studying and disseminating reports on the "threat" posed by Evangelical Christians. Meanwhile, the legislative affairs staffs of these organizations are directed to lobby against immigration reforms that could minimize the danger.

After 9/11, Jewish organizations began devoting more attention to the activities of Islamic radicals in the United States. Their web sites document the ties many of these groups have to terrorists. Amazingly, however, these watchdogs fail to employ the most basic logic and ask the most obvious question: *How did they get here*? Not one has been willing to examine the impact of mass immigration, including mass Muslim and Islamist immigration, on American Jewry, much less take a position calling for changes in U.S. immigration policy.

Charitable Institutions? Among the most troubling phenomena, widely reported by Steven Emerson, Daniel Pipes, and courageous Muslim dissidents: many of the key "American" Islamic civic and charitable institutions that have sprung up in the United States in recent years are no more than domestic incarnations of foreign Islamist political parties. Among their primary objectives are undermining Jewish political influence in the United States, propagating anti-Semitism and Holocaust denial, and destroying Israel.

Masquerading as anti-discrimination organizations, entities like the Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR), the American Muslim Council (AMC), the Muslim Student Association (MSA), and the Islamic Circle of North America (ICNA) are either offshoots of or maintain close ties to some of the most

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radical terrorist groups round the globe. Many "mainstream" Islamic organizations have their roots firmly planted in the same bloody soil that spawned Hamas, Islamic Jihad, Hezbollah, and even al-Qaeda. In addition, many American mosques, built, maintained, and controlled with money from the fundamentalist Saudi-based Wahabbi sect serve as hosts to radical mullahs—preacher/propagandists from across the Islamic world who slip through the notoriously lax U.S. visa issuance process. In a particularly flagrant case, a mullah was arrested in Europe after boasting of raising $20 million for Osama bin Laden at the El Farooq Mosque in Brooklyn. As recently as January 12, 2004, it was reported in *The New York Times* that a prominent Muslim cleric, Fawaz Mohammed Damrah, who runs the largest mosque in Ohio, was arrested for concealing his ties to terrorist organizations when he entered the United States 10 years ago.

The character of most Islamic organizations is reflected by the fact that more than half their "charities" operating in the United States have been closed down as a result of investigations launched after 9/11, with the remainder under continuing scrutiny. The "charities," operating with tax-exempt status, were recruiting agencies and financial supporters for Islamic terrorist organizations worldwide. Some were directly funding terrorism against Israel and compensating the families of terrorist bombers who murdered school children, diners, shoppers, and bus riders in Israel.

Concern over the agendas of "American" Islamic organizations is hardly a parochial Jewish matter. The Muslim terrorists of 9/11 didn't distinguish among Americans based on religion or any other factor. A seamless confluence of interests unites all Americans — Jewish or otherwise — with regard to the danger represented by the Muslim-Islamist presence. That this is a national concern is underscored by the request of the Senate Finance Committee to the Internal Revenue Service, reported in the *Washington Post*, to provide it "confidential tax and financial records, including donor lists, of dozens of Muslim charities and foundations…. part of a widening Congressional investigation into alleged ties between tax-exempt organizations and terrorist groups." The request comes on the heels of two years of investigations by the Treasury Department, the FBI, and other agencies of the federal government into Muslim "charities" with suspected ties to Al Qaeda. Among the "charities" under investigation is the largest of all such Muslim entities in the United States: the Texas-based Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development, which investigators believe is tied to the terrorist group Hamas.

It must be stressed, as many friends who grew up as orthodox Muslims across the Islamic patrimony have told me in agonizing personal confessions — friends that attended madrassah and then Islamic institutions of higher learning in countries ranging from Morocco to Egypt, Bosnia, Pakistan, and Bangladesh — that it is virtually impossible to be reared in classical Islam and not be educated to hate Jews — based on a literalist reading the Koran, where many of the verses concerning Jews (and Christians) are hateful incitements to murder.

Enlightenment Needed? Painful to say and hard to hear, barring an Islamic Enlightenment, at this juncture the only way to be a Muslim and not a Jew-hater is to be a lapsed Muslim or — if one continues to call oneself a Muslim and practice Islam — is to conduct what is, in essence, a private, personal "reformation." Engaging in this activity is something no devout Muslim could publicly confess, though this is quietly happening everywhere, whether among moderate Muslims in such places as Morocco or among Indian and Turkish Muslims. But the act is heretical according to all leading Islamic authorities of all denominations.

The status of the Koran among devout Muslims is different than that of the Bible among Jews and Christians. It approximates what the Eucharist is for religious Christians: it is the body of God, and thus any interpretive enterprise, any picking and choosing, emphasizing and de-emphasizing desecrates the body of God and is regarded as apostasy, and apostates are still sentenced to death in Islamic societies. Still, many are engaged in this internal struggle for spiritual growth, but until religious and even secular authorities within the Islamic patrimony publicly embrace this shift, there will be no counterweight to Islamism.

In time, adherents of this secret enlightenment will find their public voice as well as safety in numbers. As my Muslim friends who are scholars of Islam remind me, the intellectual work of this reform was accomplished long ago. There are no intellectual barriers to the change; the impediments are the political power and ruthlessness of its enemies, their capacity and willingness to forever stunt the growth of a living breathing humane Islam through intimidation and murder, an Islam that might yet have much to offer to the world. Whatever the risks, these Muslims of the secret enlightenment must step forward, dismiss the charge they are engaging in "takfir" (impiety), and save Islam from itself.

There *are* moderate Muslim Americans born in Islamic societies that don't support the Islamist's

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radical agendas. Some independent Muslim thinkers believe that such moderates form a silent majority within Islamic America. Where are their voices? One reason few have publicly opposed the Islamist ideology that dominates American-Muslim life is because the Islamist organizations, their members and fellow-travelers employ threats of violence, economic pressure, and foster shunning to intimidate and enforce conformity, isolating and destroying independent-minded Muslims. It is incomparably worse throughout the Islamic world, where independent Muslim thinkers are routinely murdered; their body count in only the last few decades runs into the tens of thousands. One hopes for the day when their work, and that of American-Muslim scholars like Khaled Abou El Fadl, Radwan Masmoudi, Sohail Hasmi, Khalid Durán, and others will find a larger audience and end the intellectual fossilization of Islam and the war between Islam and democratic pluralism. But that day lies in the distant future; our immediate responsibility is protecting America from the Islamism that produced 9/11.

Potential Loss of Political Power

The political influence Jews have achieved in America is a testament to how successfully they've assimilated into the American political, cultural, and economic mainstream. Equally, it's a tribute to the openness and tolerance of the vast majority of the American people who have come to accept Jews as full-fledged Americans who happen to practice a different religion.

Living at the high noon of Jewish political power, it will strike many as alarmist to suggest the sky may be about to fall. Yet that may well happen within the next 20 years. The Jewish population will be eclipsed by an ethnic group whose interests directly conflict with theirs and many of whose leaders and members are openly hostile to Jews. The Constitution, the basic integrity of the vast majority of Americans, and the professionalism of American law enforcement will militate against the kind of anti-Semitic violence taking place in France and elsewhere; at least they will slow its progress. What these will not be able to prevent is the loss of political support for Israel that would doom the Jewish state to total political isolation.

Without minimizing the effectiveness of organizations like AIPAC and others in steering U.S. foreign policy in a pro-Israel direction, it must be acknowledged that for many years they've been pushing on an open door. Once the Arabist and often anti-Semitic old guard at the State Department largely departed, support for Israel became a political no-brainer,

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except for politicians on the extreme left or right with antipathy for Israel and generalized dislike for Jews; it has brought substantial benefits and no downside. The fact is that the celebrated "Jewish lobby" won battle after battle by default. Politicians who supported Israel could count on support from Jewish voters in their home state or district. Even if there were no Jewish voters back home, there would always be Jewish money available to support the campaigns of Israel's friends in Congress. What's been missing was a countervailing force. There's never been a significant constituency as strongly opposed to Israel as American Jews have felt in favor of Israel; there's never been an anti-Israel constituency motivated enough to form political PACs and vote for or against candidates based on their stance on Middle East policy. Now there is, and it's growing rapidly as a result of immigration policy.

Even after Muslims outnumber Jews, Jews will maintain a political advantage for a time by virtue of the fact that they are well entrenched in the "old boys" network in Washington and other centers of power. Israel will also continue to enjoy strong support from millions of Evangelical Christians who see the Jews' return to the Holy Land — and their continuance there — as part of the biblical prophecy that presages the Second Coming.

Shrinking Advantage. The clock will eventually run out on these advantages. The fastest growing religious group in America, Muslims are organizing to promote their interests. Demography plus money equals political power. American Jews, in a good economic year, typically contribute about $600 million to Israel. By contrast, the Saudi regime spends in excess of $6 billion annually to promote global "Islamization." To dramatize the imbalance in resources, the $600 million American Jews sent to Israel was what the Saudis spent last year in Bosnia alone, a country of 1.5 million people. Though foreign regimes cannot, by law, pump money into domestic U.S. political races, Saudi and other Arab oil money can mount huge indirect campaigns aimed at influencing U.S. public opinion and

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policy. Combined with a growing and highly motivated Islamic voting bloc in the United States, the demography + money equation will inevitably overwhelm strong political support for Israel.

Muslim and Arab political PACs are springing up across the country. The defeat of two strongly pro-Palestinian House members in bitterly contested Democratic primary races in 2002 is being used as a clarion call by Arab and Muslim American groups to redouble their political efforts. In analyzing the defeats of Earl Hilliard (Alabama) and Cynthia McKinney (Georgia), James Zogby, president of the Arab-American Institute noted that "Arab-Americans have substantial political resources and allies and we can work to overcome the impact of these setbacks." Prominent Arab and Muslim Americans must avoid the kind of political "foolishness" that led a leader of the self-described "mainstream" American Muslim Council to stand in front of the White House and declare his support for Hamas and Hezbollah while the video cameras were rolling, cautions Zogby. That leader, Mr. Alamoudi, head of the American Muslim Council, is now under indictment for laundering money for terrorist organizations.

Upsetting the Status Quo

There's something akin to religious faith among American Jews in the Constitution as the ultimate protector of their rights. Though it's surely the most enlightened governing treatise ever devised, it's finally just words on paper. Many nations have had enlightened constitutions expressing lofty ideals and, nevertheless, turned on the Jews and other minorities.

What sets the United States apart is the nexus between the principles in the Constitution and the American people. The protections of the Constitution would mean little were it not for a population that has believed in it, bled for it, and struggled with itself to see that its principles are applied to all who live in the United States. The Constitution has made the American people what they are, and the American people make the Constitution a living, breathing document. American Jews live in a society where the contagion of anti-Semitism has never been as deeply rooted or as widespread as it is in much of the rest of the world. While no country has ever been completely free of anti-Semitism, since the middle of the 20th century the United States has come as close as any society ever has.

But change is underway. Large-scale immigration, unprecedented in magnitude and ceaseless in duration, is reshaping America. By the middle of this century the United States will cease to have a majority ethnic population. Not necessarily problematic by itself, it will present a challenge to social cohesion. Infinitely more worrying, strong multicultural forces are deconstructing in theory and in fact the ideal and reality of a dominant common culture, one that links Americans of all racial, ethnic, cultural, and religious backgrounds. During this volatile transformative period, the balance between group identity and a broader sense of national belonging has swung in the direction of tribal identity among many new immigrants. Many of the new cultures being introduced to the multicultural "salad bowl" harbor long traditions of anti-Semitism, and in the case of Muslims, are in direct conflict with Jews over issues that command the deepest emotional allegiances of both.

Perhaps this prognosis is too gloomy. The assimilative forces that liberated last century's European immigrants from their deeply rooted anti-Semitic prejudices *may* succeed in tempering the animosity of Muslim and Latin-Catholic immigrants. But if American Jewish leaders are going to continue to support mass immigration, or at least tacitly accept it, they must acknowledge the risks. They must also confront the dangers of Islamism in this country openly and confidently. They will find their concerns are shared by the great majority of Americans; they can and should have greater confidence in their Christian neighbors.

Should the day come when Jews find themselves disempowered, vulnerable, and threatened 20 to 30 years from now in a very different America, one thing Jewish leaders as well as ordinary American Jews must never be allowed to say is, "We didn't see it coming." The historical record of America's major Jewish organizations in confronting the rise of Nazism and the Holocaust is cause for shame. At the very least, it's cause for humility and a greater willingness to re-evaluate long-held positions in the face of new realities. One story from those terrible years is indicative: in the summer of 1939, when the ship *St. Louis* stood offshore with its desperate cargo of German-Jewish refugees, symbolizing for all the world the plight of Jews seeking to escape the devouring maw of Nazism, the American Jewish Committee was unable to assemble its Executive Board to meet because the members could not be troubled to interrupt their summer vacations. Today's leaders of those organizations should recall this vast historic catastrophe — as well as the failure of their predecessors as guardians of the Jewish people — as they look at this issue, consider the future, and ponder choices they can evade no longer.

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Backgrounder

High Noon to Midnight

Why Current Immigration Policy Dooms American Jewry

By Dr. Stephen M. Steinlight

Among the articles of faith in the waning culture of secular liberalism that has served as an ersatz religion for many mainstream American Jews, the most vulnerable tenet is belief in "generous legal immigration," the euphemism for open-borders immigration in the lexicon of American-Jewish public affairs agencies. This is not to accuse them of crude hypocrisy and double-talk so much as engaging in intellectual and moral trimming, self-deception, and denial. Large-scale immigration, unprecedented in magnitude and ceaseless in duration, is reshaping America. At the same time, strong multicultural forces are deconstructing the ideal and reality of a dominant common culture, one that links Americans of all backgrounds. Many of the new cultures being introduced to the multicultural "salad bowl" harbor long traditions of anti-Semitism, and in the case of Muslims, are in direct conflict with Jews over issues that command the deepest emotional allegiances of both.

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